

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An imaging device comprising:

a solid-state imaging element array including a matrix of
5 photosensor pixels;

first means for setting an effective area in the solid-state imaging
element array to a first region during a first mode of operation of the
imaging device, and setting the effective area to a second region during a
second mode of operation of the imaging device, the first and second regions
10 being different from each other in number of photosensor pixels contained
therein;

a holder for retaining the solid-state imaging element array;

first means for moving the holder between a first position at which
an optical axis related to light incident to the solid-state imaging element
15 array coincides with a center of the first region and a second position at
which the optical axis coincides with a center of the second region;

second means for fixing the holder at the first position during the
first mode of operation of the imaging device, and fixing the holder at the
second position during the second mode of operation of the imaging device;

20 third means for generating a first picture signal from signal
components generated in the first region of the solid-state imaging element
array during the first mode of operation of the imaging device; and

fourth means for generating a second picture signal from signal
components generated in the second region of the solid-state imaging
25 element array during the second mode of operation of the imaging device.

2. An imaging device as recited in claim 1, wherein the matrix in the
solid-state imaging element array has a first predetermined number "a" of

photosensor pixels in a horizontal direction and a second predetermined number "b" of photosensor pixels in a vertical direction, the first region has the first predetermined number "a" of photosensor pixels in the horizontal direction and the second predetermined number "b" of photosensor pixels in the vertical direction, and the second region has a third predetermined number "c" of photosensor pixels in the horizontal direction and the second predetermined number "b" of photosensor pixels in the vertical direction, the third predetermined number "c" is smaller than the first predetermined number "a".

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3. An imaging device as recited in claim 1, wherein the first means comprises a guide bar, means for slidably supporting the holder on the guide bar, a movable lever, and means for moving the holder along the guide bar in accordance with movement of the lever.

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4. An imaging device comprising:

a solid-state imaging element array including a matrix of photosensor pixels;

first means for setting an effective area in the solid-state imaging element array to a first region during a first mode of operation of the imaging device, and setting the effective area to a second region during a second mode of operation of the imaging device, the first and second regions being different from each other in number of photosensor pixels contained therein;

25 an optical system extending in front of the solid-state imaging element array;

second means included in the optical system for moving an optical axis of the optical system relative to the solid-state imaging element array;

third means for controlling the second means to set the optical axis coincident with a center of the first region during the first mode of operation of the imaging device, and to set the optical axis coincident with a center of the second region during the second mode of operation of the imaging device;

fourth means for generating a first picture signal from signal components generated in the first region of the solid-state imaging element array during the first mode of operation of the imaging device; and

fifth means for generating a second picture signal from signal components generated in the second region of the solid-state imaging element array during the second mode of operation of the imaging device.

5. An imaging device as recited in claim 4, wherein the matrix in the solid-state imaging element array has a first predetermined number "a" of photosensor pixels in a horizontal direction and a second predetermined number "b" of photosensor pixels in a vertical direction, the first region has the first predetermined number "a" of photosensor pixels in the horizontal direction and the second predetermined number "b" of photosensor pixels in the vertical direction, and the second region has a third predetermined number "c" of photosensor pixels in the horizontal direction and the second predetermined number "b" of photosensor pixels in the vertical direction, the third predetermined number "c" is smaller than the first predetermined number "a".